



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Alaska State Office
222 West Seventh Avenue, #13
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599
<http://www.ak.blm.gov>



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Dear Reader:

We are pleased to present the Final Amended Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve – Alaska. This amended plan describes a range of management options, including the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) final Preferred Alternative for federal lands and oil and gas resources within the approximate 4.6 million-acre Planning Area.

The Final Amended Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement incorporates changes made to the Draft Amended Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement issued in June 2004. The following is a summary of the more important changes and additions.

- Inclusion of the BLM Final Preferred Alternative (D) in [Chapter 2](#), along with a discussion of its possible effects on the environment in [Chapter 4](#).
- Within the Final Preferred Alternative (D), the deferral of Teshekpuk Lake from Oil and Gas Leasing. Also, a description of three new stipulations specific to the Final Preferred Alternative D that provide added protection to caribou calving, movement, and insect relief areas, and the Goose Molting Area north of Teshekpuk Lake.
- Minor clarifications to the text, including additional discussion of several area resources, and updated and new information such as that from the Audubon Society, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, both the Alaska State Department of Natural Resources and Department of Fish and Game, the National Research Council's report, *Cumulative Environmental Effects of Oil and Gas Activities on Alaska's North Slope* (2003), and ACIA, *Impacts of a Warming Arctic: Arctic Climate Impact Assessment* (2004).
- Comprehensive analyses of the effectiveness of mitigation measures for all Alternatives including the No Action Alternative.
- Review of specific comments on the draft amended plan and our response to those comments. Selected letters are reproduced on CD as "Public Comments" and on the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve – Alaska website.

The Preferred Alternative D would make 95% of BLM-administered lands (approximately 4.6 million acres) within the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska available for oil and gas leasing; however, as previously stated, Teshekpuk Lake (approximately 211,000 acres) is deferred from oil and gas leasing under this alternative. Stipulations and Required Operating Procedures (ROPs) would establish clearly define setbacks, restrictions, No Surface Occupancies, and guidance for all aspects of oil and gas-related operations through the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

In addition to the above discussion regarding the deferral of Teshekpuk Lake, some highlights of the protective measures in the final Preferred Alternative include:

- All deep-water lakes south of Teshekpuk Lake, (including Teshekpuk Lake) would have a ¼ mile buffer that is protected from permanent oil and gas activities.

- All water intake structures in fish-bearing or non-fish-bearing waters would be designed, operated, and maintained to prevent fish entrapment, entrainment, or injury.
- The 1998 Northeast IAP/EIS subsistence consultation buffer has been expanded to include the entire Planning Area, not just portions of several buffers along various rivers as is the case in the 1998 Northeast IAP/EIS ROD.
- The minimum required height of any new pipeline constructed is seven feet as measured from the ground to the bottom of the pipeline at vertical support members; the current requirement is five feet.
- All river setbacks (with the exception of the Ikpiuk River) have been maintained as they were developed for the 1998 Northeast IAP/EIS ROD.
- The Tingmiaksiqvik River (Ublutuooh River on USGS quadrangle maps) has been added to the list of rivers with set-backs that provide additional fish protection.
- Activities along Coastal Areas include consultation requirements with the Nuiqsut Whaling Captains Association, Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, the Barrow Whaling Captains Association, and North Slope Borough to minimize impacts to subsistence whaling activities.
- A Caribou Movement Corridor would be established to minimize disturbance and hindrance of caribou, or alteration of caribou movements (that are essential for all season use, including calving and rearing, insect relief, and migration) in the area extending eastward for four miles from the eastern shore of Teshekpuk Lake toward the Kogru Inlet.
- A Southern Caribou Calving Area would be established to minimize disturbance and hindrance of caribou, or alteration of caribou movements (that are essential for all season use, including calving and post calving, and insect relief) in the area south/southeast of Teshekpuk Lake.
- 7 Lease Tracts, ranging in size from approximately 46,000 acres to 59,000 acres (with surface occupancy restrictions,) would be identified to limit surface disturbance in the Goose Molting Area (north of Teshekpuk Lake); this would provide protection to key surface resources and subsistence. Surface disturbance would be limited to 300 acres within each of the 7 least tracts (No Exceptions.)

You will find more complete and detailed explanations of these and other protective measures and management decisions within the amended plan.

Finally, we appreciate the extensive comments and public discussions that have helped us shape our final amended plan. As required by the National Environmental Policy Act, we have submitted the amended plan to the Environmental Protection Agency. We will issue our Record of Decision 30 days from the date EPA publishes a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact Susan Childs, BLM Alaska State Office, at 907-271-1985, or Bob Schneider, BLM Northern Field Office, at 907-474-2216.

Signed by:
Henri R. Bisson
State Director

Authenticated by:
Terry Smith
Staff Assistant to State Director